



State of South Carolina

Office of the Governor

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR

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December 15, 2004

The Honorable David H. Wilkins
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Post Office Box 11867
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Mr. Speaker and Members of the House:

I am hereby returning without my approval H. 4481, R-362.

Though well-intentioned, this legislation duplicates ongoing efforts to work with communities of interest in the 2005 round of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRACC) established at the Department of Defense (DoD). In addition, no funds were appropriated to fund efforts prescribed by this legislation which I believe will provide little additional assistance in preparing communities for the BRACC process.

On March 10, 2003, I signed Executive Order 2003-10 creating the South Carolina Military Base Task Force, which included representatives from state and local governments, as well as representatives from the business community. This Task Force was created to coordinate the efforts of local business and community leaders with those of state government to bring together all of the military communities in the state for the 2005 round of BRACC. In addition, the Executive Order created the Governor's Military Base Advisory Committee to provide guidance to my office and the Task Force on providing leadership for a coordinated strategy both here in South Carolina and in Washington, D.C. House Bill 4481 puts in statute a commission which already exists and performs duties that are already being carried out.

Second, there were no resources provided for either the staffing of the commission or for the South Carolina Military Value Revolving Loan Fund. The commission is to be staffed by the Governor's Office, which, if necessary, could be done through existing staff. However, no funding was provided for the Revolving Loan Fund, which would provide financing to military communities around the state to prepare for the upcoming BRACC. The earliest that any funding could be made available by the General Assembly would be January 2005, only four months before the Secretary of Defense is to make recommendations to the BRACC.

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Third, at this point, enactment of this legislation will likely have little impact on the BRACC process because the process is very near completion. Under the BRACC timeline, the Secretary of Defense is to have the final Department of Defense recommendations to the BRACC by May 2005 and the BRACC final recommendations go to the President in September 2005. Given past history, the DoD recommendations will closely mirror the final recommendations, leaving the state with just a few short months of operational time under the proposed legislation.

Finally, and most importantly, my greatest concern is that this legislation may do more harm than good with regard to South Carolina's activities during this BRACC. Since the creation of the Advisory Committee and the Task Force, these members have invested hundreds of hours to establish and maintain close working relationships with members of the BRACC, the Department of Defense, and our congressional delegation. I fear that changing the structure at this point would do three things – upset the relations the Task Force has built, undermine each member's ability to effectively advocate before the Pentagon, BRACC, and local officials whom they have built relations with, and finally, de-stabilize an established process that has been up and running since March 10, 2003.

This administration is committed to working with the Comptroller General and the communities of interest to provide a well-coordinated effort for the upcoming round of BRACC. The state has provided funding to military communities for their efforts in preserving our military missions in South Carolina. In fact, each community will each receive \$100,000 this year for those efforts.

I am vetoing this bill because it creates duplication of current activities already underway in the state and will put in statute a commission whose purpose will end soon after it begins. For these reasons, I am returning H. 4481, R-362 to you without my signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Sanford', written over a horizontal line.

Mark Sanford